



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



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**Man Acting as Money Manager Sentenced
for Stealing Over \$1 Million from Thousand Oaks Doctor**

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that David Howard Syner (DOB 08/01/61), of Whittier, was sentenced to 7 years 8 months in state prison and ordered to pay \$987,250 plus interest for stealing more than \$1 million from a Thousand Oaks doctor. He previously pled guilty on June 22, 2023, to 13 counts of grand theft and admitted he stole more than \$500,000. Syner also admitted to aggravating factors including that he took advantage of a position of trust or confidence to commit the offense, the crime was carried out in a way that indicated planning, sophistication, or professionalism, and the crime involved actual taking or damage of great monetary value. A six-week restitution hearing concluded in January 2024.

Between 2014 and August 2018, Syner stole more than \$1 million from a local psychiatrist he befriended. The victim gave Syner control of financial accounts so he could manage the victim's business affairs. Over four years, Syner used more than 13 schemes to steal from the victim. He used the money on luxury goods and services for himself and his fiancée, which included first-class travel, entertainment, tuition, rent, health care insurance, cosmetic surgery, and car payments.

In August 2018, when the victim realized Syner was stealing from him, he hired a CPA to uncover how much money was stolen. By October 2018, the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Bureau of Investigation joined the investigation and in 2020, began the use an in-house forensic accountant to track the money.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Howard Wise, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Fraud and Technology Crimes Unit, prosecuted the case.

“This case emphasizes the need to verify and supervise when allowing another person to access your financial records, regardless of your relationship,” Mr. Wise said. “No matter how smart you are, you can become a victim when you trust but don’t verify.”

Case: 2018033033

Defendant Information:

David Howard Syner (DOB 08/01/61)

Whittier

Convicted of:

- (13 counts) PC 487(a) – Grand Theft

Special Allegations:

- PC 186.11(a)(2) – Excessive loss over \$500,000
- CRC 4.421(a)(11) – The defendant took advantage of a position of trust or confidence to commit the offense
- CRC 4.421(a)(7) – The defendant received concurrent sentences for other crimes
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, or professionalism.
- CRC 4.421(a)(9) – The crime involved an attempted or actual taking or damage of great monetary value
- CRC 4.421(b)(3) – The defendant previously served a prior federal prison term